

of revenue from the first day of the year following that to which the arrears relate at the rate of one pie per rupee per month, portions of a month and fractions of a rupee being omitted in the calculation. No further concession is necessary. As the defaulter generally retains possession of the land until the sale is confirmed, it is not expedient to fix the time up to which interest may be levied.

SUBJECT No. 88.

Preparation of A and B lists of waste lands.

Messrs. Suryanaranappa, Sonne Gowda and Byre Gowda, Kolar Taluk.

*Summary of discussion.*—It is prayed that A and B lists of lands may be ordered to be prepared for the convenience of the raiyats, as was being done formerly, and orders issued for the grant of lands without sale when there is no “Malki” in them.

*Reply of Government.*—The revival of the old practice is unnecessary. Instructions will be issued to avoid delay in the disposal of all darkhasts and especially those where, owing to the existence of malki or other reasons, it is considered necessary to sell the land.

SUBJECT No. 89.

(1) Reservation of 50 yards of land on either side of streams.

(2) Reconsideration of Government order regarding the reservation of forests.

Mr. C. Danvers, North Mysore Planters' Association.

*Summary of discussion.*—It is requested that Government will reconsider their order about reserving 50 yards on either side of streams in lands applied for for cultivation and appoint a commission to enquire thoroughly into this question, as it is one of great importance to the planting community.

2. Pray, Government to reconsider the forest reservation policy, which bears oppressively not only on applicants for land but on grazing facilities.

Mr. Danvers:—As already set forth in my address on Saturday, the North Mysore Planters' Association requests Government to appoint a commission to enquire into the bearing of the 50 yards rule and forest reservations on planting interests.

Between these two, we are, as it were, between two fires and can do little. We pray Government to enquire whether there is any real necessity for such huge reservations and also to further enquire into the necessity for the 50 yards rule, which, from the planter's point of view and his invariable experience, is unnecessary and even deleterious to the object Government rightly has in view.

It absolutely cuts us off from acquiring any reasonable block of land, even when there is no objection to granting it on the part of Government, because, as I pointed out on Saturday, it reduces the available land to an inappreciable and highly inconvenient area. Fences and side-drains will cost considerable sums for provision and for up-keep and then there will be little to protect.

Considering the enormous extent of the reserves, surely sufficient water-courses are protected in them. This alone should allow Government to be easier with waters in unreserved lands. But our great stand is on this point, that cultivating land as we do does *not* tend to diminish the water-supply but rather to increase it. Every planter will tell you that after opening land he finds his water-courses fuller, and the reasons are not far to seek. The chief one is that cultivated soil will absorb much more rainfall than even evergreen forest does, while it will absorb *infinitely* more than the lands that grow deciduous forest, as these latter are nearly all possessed of a very hard surface which sheds water more easily than it absorbs it. As I have informed you, Sir, on other occasions, when we plant such land—say at Balehonnur or in similar regions—we are obliged to make catch drains at the top of our clearings to divert the awful deluges which pour down from the hard land above; whilst in the clearing itself, once it is dug, renovation-pitted, or otherwise cultivated, there is *no* such running off of water, save from the hard surfaces of roads.

We further maintain that there is far more evaporation of water through the leaves of a dense forest than from a judiciously shaded garden, or a rubber estate, while it is a universally accepted fact that checking capillary attraction by breaking the surface of land tends directly to the conservation of soil moisture. And in the dry season, the deciduous forests shed their leaves and the sun pours in to make the ground dry and hard and so prevent it from absorbing water till well on into the monsoon. Rubber is certainly deciduous, but soil cultivation will prevent the ground from becoming like iron, *besides* which, the dropped leaves will shade the surface, while in unreserved deciduous lands *fire* will remove them. No doubt an occasional owner will not cultivate properly, and this will be a hard case for Government; but hard cases make bad law, and it is not just to starve the many because one is a sinner.

We do not know what Government's arguments are *for* the retention of this rule; and Government has only our word at present that our methods conserve rather than waste moisture, and so we pray that a commission be appointed to take local evidence in the matter, as we are at the present time extremely embarrassed by things as they stand; and it is so plain to *us* that the rule is wrongly advised and erroneous in principle.

With the 50 yards rule *and* the reservations we can get little land; and we ask Government to reconsider the

whole position, and to find us a way of living from one side or the other, or from both.

Considering the enormous extent of forest in Mysore, an extent that strikes one with fresh wonder every time it is viewed from any *one* of the many hill-tops of the Western Ghats and the Bababudan Hills; and considering that only an infinitesimal portion of this huge area is suitable for the cultivation of coffee, tea or rubber, owing to peculiarities of soil or situation, we are really asking a very small thing of Government when we ask it to rescind this ruling, even if the mythical advantages of the 50 yards fetish were real and solid.

If anything I have said, Sir, should allow you to think that the rule may be withdrawn without the medium of a commission of enquiry, we shall be delighted and grateful; for it will save the *time* that seems so small a thing to a Government and so much to the individual; and he gives twice who gives quickly.

The Conservator of Forests stated that instead of appointing a commission immediately it would be better to publish an article on the subject in some scientific journal and invite discussion. After the views of persons who had carefully studied the question were before Government, it would be easy to decide the question. Personally he said that it was his opinion that while the headwaters of streams should be strictly protected, the restriction may be withdrawn in the lower portions of a water-course. As far as forest reservation was concerned, it was a mistake to suppose that there was any excessive reservation and the real reason of the difficulty to get lands now was that all the best lands had already been taken up. Grazing was permitted within the State Forests and during the settlement of the forest the Forest, Settlement Officer paid every consideration to the needs of the locality.

Mr. Danvers stated that if the investigation into the necessity for such reservation would take time, the relaxation of the rule might be permitted at least in the case of lands granted for cardamom cultivation. It was pointed out to him that this had already been done in Government Order No. R. 2294-305—L. R. 1-1897-13, dated 14th September 1904.

*Reply of Government.*—The Conservator will collect opinions on the subject from competent expert Forest officers and others and report to Government whether and subject to what conditions the relaxation of the rule may be permitted.